

JWF Fund 2020 – Outline of the Project

I. Construction of a protected spring well in Kake village, Cameroon

- Organization: Bridgers Association Cameroon (#047)
- Cost: US\$1,205 (JWF Fund: US\$1,000, contribution from the Bridgers Association: US\$205)
- Number of direct beneficiaries: 1,000 people
- Background:

Access to government water services, such as potable running water, are non-existent in the village of Kake. Women and children were responsible for fetching water from the main collection point, which was more than 40 minutes (900m) away from the households. This problem was compounded by the fact that the main source of water could at some point become contaminated due to an unhealthy surrounding environment and the rapid deterioration of protective structures around the natural spring, which left it unprotected and completely open. This condition exposed the source to external intrusions such as debris, animals, and bird defecation.



Natural spring before the project



Completed protected spring water facility

- Main features of the project:
Construction of a protected spring water facility and improvement of its surroundings, a meeting of the general community to discuss the project, a campaign for proper hand washing to prevent COVID-19, a campaign on proper handling and use of the new facility, training on maintaining and repairing the infrastructure for sustainability, water quality testing, and establishment of a water management committee and a fund collection committee
- Sustainability:
The water management committee is responsible for maintenance and cleaning of the newly-constructed structure. The committee is also tasked with reporting any damage to the structure to the fund collection committee so that together they can carry out the necessary repairs.

Through improvement of the drinking water source, the living environment of the community is expected to improve.

JWF Fund 2020 – Results of Follow-up Observations

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[Current Situation]

- **Protective structure over the water resource :**

The well is functioning as planned and providing clean and safe water throughout the year. It supplies water not only to Kake village but also to neighboring communities, with more than 2000 indirect beneficiaries. The metallic cover and the collection pipe had been damaged, and the lock was not working properly. We found that children often came to fetch water from the well and were taking good care of it. Residents of neighboring villages came to fetch water at night, which unfortunately left some damage to the structure.

- **Water management committee:**

The water management committee has done a good job of operating the facility. However, some people from neighboring villages had fetched water at night, damaging the lock, cover, and collection pipe on multiple occasions. The committee has been proactive in addressing this issue and is exploring measures to mitigate such incidents in the future.

- **The fund collection committee :**

The fund collection committee has been active. The sudden death of its highly motivated president had been a significant hindrance. Nonetheless, they continue to operate effectively. The committee has repaired the metallic cover and collecting pipe multiple times and changed the lock to prevent unauthorized access, while actively seeking a solution to the problem.

[Changes]

Hygiene practices were not always a priority in Kake village, but the availability of clean and safe water has encouraged the community to adopt better hygiene practices, such as hand washing, brushing of teeth, and regular bathing. Overall food hygiene in the community has improved greatly; even children now tend to wash fruit before consuming it. The number of reported cases of water-borne diseases in Kake village and neighboring communities has decreased by approximately 60% since the implementation of the facility. The community was trained on the importance of maintaining good hygiene practices, contributing to a further reduction in water-borne diseases.

[Others]

Recently the organization received a request regarding a water crisis in a neighboring village. The people of that community pleaded for the same sort of help we provided to the people of Kake. Unfortunately, efforts to source funds for the project and many others in the East Region of Cameroon, where there is a great need, have not been fruitful. JWF Fund 2020 has been helpful, asking that the funding be provided if possible.



Family arriving from a neighboring village to fetch water from the spring well



Youth leaders explaining how they contributed



Children happily fetching water from the well

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Voices from the beneficiaries (Excerpts)



Alima Appolinaire 77 years old

I have seen significant positive changes in the way my people behave, when it comes to hygiene. With the structure protecting the well which provides clean and safe water, there has been a noticeable reduction in water-borne diseases such as diarrhea and typhoid fever. A decrease in cases of skin diseases caused by contaminated water has been observed, so health in the village has really improved. I've noticed changes not just in my village but beyond it as well. The availability of clean water has had a significant impact on the health and hygiene of neighboring villages, as they also rely on the same water source. My village has improved relations with its neighbors, who no longer have to travel long distances to access clean water. Overall, this project has brought positive changes to my people and to those living in the neighboring villages as well.



Tchalla Marcel 32 years old

The fund collection committee consists of five members – the president, vice president, treasurer, auditor, and a discipline master. We have faced some challenges in collecting fees and maintaining the facility. The death of our president was a significant setback for us as she was the main motivator and driving force behind the committee. We have struggled to find someone to lead the committee. Some households have been unable to pay the monthly fees due to financial constraints. Repeated cases of vandalism on the cover and lock of the structure by those fetching water at night is another problem we are facing. However, we are working hard to overcome these challenges. We receive comments from users, especially those from the neighboring village, and the majority have been positive. People are grateful for the availability of clean water, and they have noticed a decrease in the incidence of water-borne illnesses. Typical comments are: “Now we can drink water and eat better.”, “I no longer spend money on the hospital because of typhoid, now that my kids have access to clean water.”, and “The number of people coming from outside to fetch water tells us that its the best situation we have had in a very long time”.



Essana Mbita Pauline 37 years old

I feel very grateful and relieved to have access to clean and safe drinking water. Before the project was completed, we had to walk long distances to fetch water from dirty sources, which was very time-consuming and dangerous, especially for the women and children. I paid less attention to hand-washing before, but now I don't only practice it, but also teach my children how and when to wash their hands. Secondly, I now always make sure the container for fetching water is clean and has a cover. My children have become healthier and don't get sick as often as they used to. I also have more time for other activities since I don't need to fetch water from far away. This project made my family's lives much easier and healthier.